

Dear Chairman Martin:

I am writing to challenge the Comcast/Time Warner/Adelphia merger (FCC Docket No. 05-192) and the AT&T/BellSouth merger (FCC Docket No. 06-74).

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Personal Note:

Although I am not quite clear on how politics and company mergers work, I know enough not to support such a merger. One would have to be blind not to see the harm in such a merger. Such outdated monopolies must be exterminated from the outset, before they become a problem. They may be funding the government now and appearing honorable and composed. However, as time goes on, their egos will grow along with their fat wallets and greedy guts. AT&T will become the new fat man of America -- feeding on everybody until he attains gargantuan proportions, quenching all opposing candidates. This "candidate Quenching" will ultimately lead to monopolistic prices, fewer choices, (thus, disabling consumer freedom) and an almost socialistic control of the media. We laugh about China filtering the internet for it's citizens, but in time, we too, will be able to access only government and AT&T sites at home. Everybody will feel the impact -- from students, to homemakers, to business men/women. It is true that the Internet is not patented, nor is it home to exclusively honorable content. But, it is home to enough rich and diverse content, that makes today's world much more livable and easy. AT&T is a company; and, like any company it will ignore these self-evident truths. However, as time goes on after the AT&T merger, even its own employees will begin to quarrel and dissent over their practices. The government will find itself up against a giant merged power, with abilities that surpass the monopolies of the early 20th century ten-fold. AT&T claims it will improve service, and make the world a happier place -- generally. That's what Enron claimed too. HOW it will make it a happier place, however, is up to them -- as well as for WHO it will make it a happier place. I can tell you right away for who -- for them and their stockholders. Not for America. Do you really want to eradicate the free internet, in favor to empty promises and corporation greed? I hope you're NOT going to sell my freedom away -- last time I voted for my representatives, I did not vote for the privatization of the internet. The US government has a plethora of problems and corruption already -- let's not throw another log on the wagon, when 3 of it's wheels are already gone.

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Allowing the largest telecommunications company and the two largest cable companies and in the United States to grow even larger does not serve the public interest.

The concentration of media power is a growing problem in this country. Though we have more channels available than ever before, they are increasingly falling under the control of a handful of giant corporations. The cost of broadband service also remains out of reach for many households. Americans are hungry for more competition in services. However, these mergers will only starve Americans of this needed competition.

Allowing AT&T to combine with BellSouth will give the top three broadband providers control of over half of all broadband connections in the country. At the same time, the Time Warner/Comcast/Adelphia merger will give Comcast and Time Warner increased power over entire regions of the United States, allowing rates to rise even as the digital divide continues to grow.

The FCC should block these transactions or impose strict conditions to protect free speech and competition under its "public interest standard." If the FCC decides to allow either of these mergers, it should require the following conditions:

1. Subscribers must be able to choose from competitive Internet Service Providers ("open access"). The FCC should also ensure that these companies cannot discriminate against any Internet content or rival service and that every service will be treated exactly the same ("Network Neutrality").
2. Companies must be required to sell broadband access separate from video and telephone service, and at the same price ("naked broadband" or "unbundling").
3. Any subscriber must be able to connect any device to the network (such as a Wi-Fi router) that does not harm the network.
4. Take steps to protect public access programming ("PEG"). Cable companies have become less responsive to the needs and requirements of communities. The quality of public accountability in local franchise

agreements has declined, as big companies leverage their power to squeeze local governments. Likewise, telecommunications giants — like AT&T — are trying to eliminate the remaining vestiges of effective local oversight and control altogether.

5. Independent programmers must be able to reach subscribers. We are required to buy channels we don't want or need because providers of video service bundle them together.

6. Any company that owns both programming and video systems should be required to provide competitors with access to their regional sports and other programming needed to offer competing services, so consumers will still have real choices.

In conclusion, I ask the FCC to consider the interests of the people like me who pay the cable, telephone and broadband bills and watch the programming. Many of us already have enough trouble trying to afford broadband or cable TV. Please don't make it even harder for us to find competitors, or make it easier for Comcast, Time Warner and AT&T to raise prices or block local and independent voices.